



CHESTERFIELD COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Department: Human Resource Management
Subject: Adverse Weather and Emergency Events Policy

Policy Number: 6-12
Supersedes: 12/22/03
Date Issued: 01/01/05

I. INTRODUCTION

This policy establishes responsibilities and prescribes procedures for notifying county employees of Chesterfield County government operations during adverse weather conditions and other emergency events. The intent of this policy is to provide an adequate balance between the safety of Chesterfield County employees and the provision of an acceptable level of customer service. Release, dismissal, and absence from work during adverse weather conditions are included.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. **Adverse Weather** – Any weather conditions that might jeopardize the safety of both county employees and the public.
- B. **Designated Staff** – Employees who are required to work when the county is closed, regardless of weather conditions or emergency events.
- C. **Emergency Events** – Any natural or manufactured disaster that may jeopardize the safety of both county employees and the public.
- D. **Minimum Staffing** – Employees who are required to work upon appointment by the department director/office administrator in order to respond to customer needs (telephone or face-to-face services determined by the department director/office administrator).

III. POLICY

Unless otherwise notified by sources identified under Section VII of this administrative procedure, all personnel are to assume that Chesterfield County will be open each regular workday regardless of any weather or other emergency condition that may develop. Continuity of critical operations/services during adverse weather conditions is essential. Critical operations may include, but are not limited to: Police Department, Fire Department, Emergency Communications, Sheriff's Department, Juvenile Detention, Youth Group Home, MH/MR Residential Services and Utilities emergency operations. Employees whose services are vital to these operations will be required to report to, or remain at their work sites in emergency situations. In addition to critical activities, departments may also be required to maintain the minimum level of staff needed to provide customer services. Under conditions of adverse weather or emergency events, designated employees and minimum staffing employees may be required to report to work when other county employees are excused. Departments are responsible for maintaining and posting a list of employees responsible for providing minimum staffing. During an adverse weather or emergency event any employee may be classified as designated and required to report to work. These individuals will then be considered designated, and must report to work and will be compensated according to Section X.

IV. SUMMARY

County status will be provided to employees according to the County Status Options. If there is no media broadcast regarding Chesterfield County, employees must report to work as usual and expect that all county offices will be fully opened. If county offices are in any status other than fully opened, the status (e.g., Late Opening at 10:30 a.m., or Early Closing 3:00 p.m.) will be broadcast via the media stations identified in Section VII.B, placed on broadcast voice mail, internal e-mail and the weather telephone line.

- A. When county offices operate under ***Closed-Designated Staff*** status due to adverse weather or emergency events—designated personnel only will report to work or remain at work as usual.
- B. When county offices operate under ***Minimum Staffing*** status due to adverse weather or emergency events—designated employees will report to work as usual and employees identified to perform duties under minimum staffing conditions will report to work as usual.
- C. When the status of county offices is ***Early Closing-Designated Staff*** due to adverse weather or emergency events—designated employees will remain at work as usual.
- D. When the status of county offices is ***Early Closing-Minimum Staffing*** due to adverse weather or emergency events—designated employees will remain at work as usual and employees identified to perform duties under minimum staffing conditions will remain at work as usual.
- E. When the status of county offices is ***Late Opening*** due to adverse weather or emergency events—designated employees will report to work as usual.
- F. **Special Circumstances** – Special circumstances relating to employees who are otherwise absent or late on days when adverse weather or emergency events affects county operations are covered under Section VII, Special Instructions, of this administrative procedure.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. The County Administrator is responsible for making decisions regarding county operations under adverse weather and emergency event conditions.
- B. The Chief of Police, through the Shift Commander, is responsible for advising the County Administrator when weather conditions or emergency events may negatively impact county operations.
- C. Department Directors/Office Administrators are responsible for:
 - 1. The selection of designated staff and minimum staffing employees. (These employees will be notified in advance in writing by the department director/office administrators of their status and their related responsibilities regarding adverse weather.)
 - 2. Coordinating early closing with the County Administrator to avoid confusion and promote equitable treatment of all employees.
 - 3. Ensuring that department coverage is sufficient to handle telephone or face-to-face customer service requirements during minimum staffing. (If face-to-face services are provided during normal operations, a minimal level of like services should be available under minimum staffing.) Departments with interrelated services should preplan coordination of services during adverse weather conditions.
- D. All employees are responsible for obtaining information regarding county operations during non-duty hours by listening to any of the Public Broadcasting Systems listed in Section VII.B of this policy, calling voice mail or the weather line at 748-1256. See Section VII - Notification.

VI. PROCEDURES

The Police Shift Commander will notify the County Administrator when adverse weather conditions or emergency events may adversely impact county government operations, as well as public and employee safety, based on Emergency Communications Center information gathered from road condition reports from the Police Department and the current weather forecast from the National Weather Service or other appropriate sources. The decision to effect early closing, late opening or closure will be made by the County Administrator. Department directors/office administrators will not effect closure or reduce operations without approval of the County Administrator. Any decision affecting hours of operation will be communicated as indicated below in Section VII.

VII. NOTIFICATION

- A. During normal working hours the County Administrator will notify Human Resource Management, Emergency Communications and Public Affairs when adverse weather conditions or emergency events affect county operations and will advise of the type of closure, effective time and staffing requirements.
- Human Resource Management will contact department directors/office administrators by internal e-mail broadcast message and individual calls to departments without internal e-mail. Public Affairs will contact the media* and create a broadcast voice mail and broadcast internal e-mail message. Emergency Communications will activate the County Administrative group page and program the county employee weather line with the adverse weather or emergency events announcement. Department Directors/Office Administrators will notify their respective employees of the change in county and departmental operations.
- B. During non-operational hours the Police Shift Commander will notify the County Administrator of adverse weather and road conditions by 5:00 a.m. The County Administrator will make a decision regarding the status and staffing of county operations by 5:15 a.m. and advise the Police Shift Commander. The Police Shift Commander will notify Emergency Communications of the County Administrator's decision. Emergency Communications will notify Public Affairs, activate the County Administrative group page and program the county employee weather line. Public Affairs will notify the following media to provide broadcast of the appropriate information, and create a broadcast voice mail message:
- Television:** WTVR-TV 6; WRIC-TV 8; WWBT-TV 12
- Radio:** WRVA - 1140 AM
- C. All county employees are responsible for monitoring these stations or calling either 748-1256 or their voice mail for a recorded message pertaining to the status of county offices for that day. Employees should continue to monitor all broadcast systems for possible updates prior to departing for work.
- Do not call the County Administrator's office or any emergency communications numbers.***

VIII. SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

- A. When the County Administrator decides during non-operational hours that the status of county operations will be either ***Closed-Designated Staff*** or ***Minimum Staffing***, the employees' status will be determined as follows:
1. If county operations are being fully closed (***Closed-Designated Staff***), employees who are not designated will be excused from work, and full time excused employees will not be charged leave or lose pay. Designated staffing employees who do not report to work during closed-designated staffing status will be charged leave and may be disciplined.
 2. If county operations will be ***Minimum Staffing***, designated and minimum staffing employees must report to work and all other employees will be excused from work, and full time excused employees will not be charged leave or lose pay. Designated and minimum staffing employees who do not report to work during minimum staffing status will be charged leave and may be disciplined.
 3. When county offices are closed due to adverse weather, part-time employees who do not work any of their scheduled shift will receive no compensation for the closure day.
- B. When the decision is made during operational hours to close early, the employees' status will be determined as follows:
1. If the county operations are being fully closed (***Early Closing-Designated Staff***), designated staff will remain on duty and full-time and part-time employees who are not designated will be allowed to leave work with no charge to leave or loss of pay for the remaining hours of work following closure.

2. If county operations are open with minimum staffing (*Early Closing-Minimum Staffing*), designated and minimum staffing employees must remain on duty and full-time and part-time employees will be allowed to leave with no charge to leave or loss of pay for the remaining hours of work following closure. Only those employees designated as minimum staffing will receive annual leave credits
- C. When the decision is made during non-operational hours to delay the opening of county offices, designated employees will report for normal hours and all other full-time employees will be excused without charge to leave or loss of pay until the county offices are scheduled to open. Part-time employees who are scheduled to work but are unable to work because of a late opening of county offices due to adverse weather will be paid for their entire shift provided they report to work at the designated opening time.

If a late opening is in effect and an employee reports later than the late opening time, the employee will be charged leave for the time between the late opening time and the time the employee actually reports for duty.
 - D. If an employee elects not to report to work due to adverse weather conditions when county offices are open, he/she will be charged annual leave for the time period in which county offices are open.
 - E. If an employee was absent on approved leave for the entire work shift, the entire absence is charged to appropriate leave (i.e., annual, sick or leave without pay).
 - F. Employees who report to work prior to the late opening of the county offices will not be entitled to any additional compensation.
 - G. In the event that county offices are closed due to adverse weather or emergency event, non-designated and non-minimum staffing employees who work a flexible schedule (in lieu of the standard 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. schedule) will be paid a maximum of 8 hours for the closure day. For example, if the flex employee usually works 10 hours on Monday and the county is closed on Monday due to adverse weather, the employee would take two hours of annual leave or work two additional hours later in the week.
 - H. In the event that the opening of county offices is delayed due to adverse weather, non-designated staff that work flexible schedules will revert back to the standard county work schedule of 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. For example, if the employee's flexible schedule is from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and the county offices open at 10:00 a.m., the employee would report for work from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. If the employee leaves earlier than 5:00 p.m., the difference in hours can be made up during the remainder of the workweek or by using annual leave.
 - I. When adverse weather conditions or emergency events develop over the weekend and/or after 5:00 p.m. and before midnight, and thereby affect non-essential services that operate during these hours, the responsible Deputy County Administrator or designee will make the decision regarding operational status of these departments.
 - J. When adverse weather conditions or emergency events result in a late opening or early closing, the announcement shall be made by including a specific time for opening or closing, not by a duration of time (e.g., Late opening at 10:30 would be announced, not Late opening two-hour delay). This avoids confusion for employees working flexible time shifts. These employees should begin their shift at the announced opening time.

IX. TRANSPORTATION

- A. Safety of employees and the public is a primary concern during adverse weather conditions or other emergency events. It is the responsibility of each employee to arrive to work on time and in the safest way possible.

- B. Designated and minimum staffing employees are responsible for ensuring that they are at work for their scheduled shifts and should make arrangements in advance to ensure they will be at work on time and arrive in the safest way possible.
- C. Department Directors/Office Administrators should encourage advance planning for designated and minimum staffing employees to facilitate their safe travel to and from work during adverse weather.

X. COMPENSATION

- A. In addition to their regular pay, all designated and minimum staffing employees who are required to work, and do work during periods when county offices are closed or operating under Minimum Staffing, due to adverse weather or emergency event conditions will be compensated with annual leave (PTL for part time employees) at the rate of one hour per hour worked up to a maximum of eight (8) hours. This compensation will not be effective for periods of 2 hours or less. For example, if county offices close from 3:00 p.m.—5:00 p.m., a designated or minimum staffing employee who must work that time would receive no additional leave. However, if offices closed from 2:00 p.m.—5:00 p.m., designated and minimum staffing employees would be given three hours of additional annual or PTL leave.
- B. Additional annual or PTL leave will be given to all designated and minimum staffing employees required to work within the 24-hour day of closure and only when the number of hours county offices are closed exceeds two hours. The 24-hour day will be from 12:00 a.m. through 12:00 midnight of the day county offices are closed. For example, if county offices closed at 1:00 p.m. on December 21, meaning 4 hours of closure, any designated or minimum staffing employees who worked between the hours of 12:00 a.m. and 12:00 midnight of December 21 would receive 4 hours of annual or PTL leave. If county offices are closed a full day (8:30 a.m.—5:00 p.m.) designated and minimum staffing employees will earn annual leave hour for hour up to a maximum of eight (8) hours, during the 24-hour day of closure.
- C. Only designated and minimum staffing employees will receive annual leave credits for working during periods when county offices are closed or operating under Minimum Staffing.
- D. Payroll liaisons must complete the Adverse Weather Reporting Form and submit to the payroll section of the Accounting Department for the leave to be posted. (The Adverse Weather Reporting Form is automated and available on the HRM Intranet site.) Any leave earned between January 1st and September 15th will be added to the employee's balances within two pay periods. Any leave earned after September 15th will be added to the employee's annual leave balance in the second pay period in January. Should the employee terminate prior to the second pay period in January, the leave will be paid out with any remaining annual leave in the employee's final check.
- E. The County Administrator may authorize the payment of straight time pay or flat rate pay to exempt employees performing work in excess of their regularly scheduled hours to support an Emergency Operation Plan event.

Department Name: _____

Adverse Weather Date(s): _____

	NAME	SSN	HRS EARNED
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23			

Prepared by _____

Phone _____

Date _____

Approved _____

Date _____

For Payroll Use Only:

County status on date earned: _____

Pay period processed: _____

Processed by: _____